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RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2127
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RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0002
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1646
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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/19/2020
TAGS: [IZ](#) [PGOV](#) [PROP](#) [GM](#)
SUBJECT: GERMANY SHARES U.S. CONCERNS ON BA'ATHIST
EXCLUSION IN UPCOMING IRAQI ELECTIONS

REF: STATE 5980

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER-COUNSELOR GEORGE GLASS, REASONS, 1.4
(B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) On January 29, poloffs delivered reftel demarche regarding the recent exclusion of Ba'athists in Iraqi elections to MFA office director for Iraq, Klemens Semtner. Semtner said that Germany shares our concerns and noted that the German Ambassador to Iraq had already flagged this issue during a meeting with President Talabani in mid-January. Semtner added that the German Ambassador repeated these concerns to Iraqi Vice President Hashimi on January 23.

[1](#)2. (C) Semtner underscored Germany's desire to walk a fine line out of fear that Iraqis could complain of interference in domestic affairs -- or perceive advocacy on behalf of specific individuals. Nevertheless, he said that German officials continued to point out their concerns about the timing of the IHEC decision and the effects it could have on Sunni involvement in the elections. Semtner further pointed out that Germany does not see the IHEC decision through the lens of Sunni/Shia tension but, instead, as a Baathist/Secularist issue.

[1](#)3. (C) Semtner noted that the EU consensus on this issue is that member states will engage bilaterally with the Iraqis. The ultimate goal, he said, is to promote a transparent process that is inclusive of all Iraqis.
Murphy